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Influence of George Eliot  
Upon Thomas Hardy

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The Influence of George Eliot Upon  
Thomas Hardy

...BY...

**Belle Irene Gillespie, A. B.**

THESIS

For the Degree of Master of Arts in English  
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THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY

*Belle Irene Gillespie, A. B.*

ENTITLED *The Influence of George Eliot*  
*upon Thomas Hardy.*

IS APPROVED BY ME AS FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF *Master of Arts.*


*Samuel Kilham Dodge*

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF *the English Language &*  
*Literature.*





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In William Crary Brownell's "Victorian Prose Masters" the following statement is made in the chapter on George Eliot:<sup>1</sup> "It was doubtless in thinking mainly of George Eliot, whose aptest pupil he was, that more than a score of years ago Mr. Hardy spoke of fiction as having 'taken a turn, for better or worse, for analyzing rather than depicting character and emotion'." The words "whose aptest pupil he was" show that, in the opinion of one person at least, a certain influence was exerted by George Eliot upon Thomas Hardy. The question immediately arises, Upon what grounds did Mr. Brownell make such a statement? What proof did he have that Mr. Hardy was "an apt pupil of George Eliot?" My purpose in this thesis is to make a careful study of the works of the two novelists, and to discover, if possible, the foundations upon which Mr. Brownell based his assertion. For this work I have chosen two novels by George Eliot--"Adam Bede" and "Silas Marner," and two by Thomas Hardy--"Far from the Madding Crowd" and "The Return of the Native," typical representatives of the art of each.

The two main elements which enter into the construction of the novel are character and plot. The setting also is important that it furnishes the background in which the characters move and the plot advances. The novel, then, is composed of three elements; and the different methods used by novelists of treating these elements, have, broadly speaking,-- divided their work into two classes,--novels of character, and novels of incident. On the whole, the novels of George Eliot are novels of character, while those of Thomas Hardy are novels of incident.

(1) P. 111.





Taking up now the study of the three elements of the novel, I shall consider first the methods of character-portrayal in "Silas Marner" and "Adam Bede." Character is most often drawn by means of speech and action--the natural ways by which people are known. But the author has the prerogative of going deeper than this, of searching the inner life of his characters and commenting upon it; of quoting their thoughts, and revealing the mental processes and motives which prompt them to action. Of the two methods the latter is used most effectively in "Silas Marner." The center of interest in this book is the hero, Silas Marner, and around him, the whole story revolves. The gradual development of his character under certain influences is ably portrayed by the method which is most typically George Eliot's comment and analysis. His early life was one of trusting simplicity<sup>1</sup> and ardent faith;<sup>2</sup> his belief in his friend was unsuspecting,<sup>3</sup> he "loved him with tender love, and trusted in an unseen goodness,"<sup>4</sup> When his friend deceived him, he was in despair; his trust in God and man was shaken,<sup>5</sup> and his life was aimless.<sup>6</sup> He shunned all intercourse with his neighbors;<sup>7</sup> and, occupied with no purpose in life, began to hoard his money,<sup>8</sup> his life "narrowing and hardening itself more and more into a mere pulsation of desire and satisfaction that had no relation to any other human being."<sup>9</sup> While his life had no real purpose, it was an "eager life, filled with immediate purpose,"<sup>10</sup> which fenced him in from the wide cheerless unknown," and when his money was stolen, his whole support was gone. The news of his robbery began to interest people in him, and Silas became aware of a "faint consciousness of dependence on their good-will."<sup>11</sup>

(1) P. 23. (2) P. 24. (3) P. 23. (4) P. 142. (5) P. 31.

(6) P. 35. (7) P. 32. (8) P. 40, 74. (9) P. 41. (10) P. 126.

(11) P. 134.





A new interest now came into his life, and gold--<sup>1</sup> in the shape of a child's golden curls--came to take the place of his stolen treasure. Something had come to take its place which drew him beyond the love of money alone.<sup>2</sup> A "Little child had come to link him once more with the whole world."<sup>3</sup>

While the author's comment and analysis play such an important part in the delineation of the character of Silas, his conversation and actions have very little share in it. His most important action, that which throws the most light upon his character, follows his discovery of the loss of his gold.<sup>4</sup> Until near the end, his conversation is of very slight importance. In his few speeches now, however, we see the true spirit of the man; his faith and trust in the care and guidance of Providence;<sup>5</sup> and his intense love for Eppie.<sup>6</sup>

Personal description is also used sparingly in the portrayal of Silas; we are told very little about him. All we know is that he was a pale, thin man,<sup>7</sup> with prominent, short-sighted, brown eyes.<sup>8</sup> We have to depend, for our conception of Silas, upon these few statements assisted by the author's exhaustive analysis.

In the portrayal of Dolly Winthrop--one of the most delightful characters in the book,--the author has used conversation most effectively. Dolly's simple talk brings out her faith in God, or "Them as are above,"<sup>9</sup> to use her own quaint form of expression, and her strong religious belief.<sup>10</sup> Her speech, too, is colored by a grain of philosophical wisdom.<sup>11</sup> Her attitude toward life may be summed up in these few words of advice, which

(1) P. 179, 198. (2) P. 211. (3) P. 210, 211, 202, 223.

(4) P. 75, 78. (5) P. 227, 237. (6) P. 263, 278. (7) P. 94.

(8) P. 19. (9) P. 138. (10) P. 223, 278. (11) P. 198, 227, 278.



she gives to Silas:--"There's trouble i' this world, and there's things as we can niver make out the rights on. And all as we've got to do is to trusten, Master Marner,--to do the right thing as fur as we know,<sup>1</sup> and to trusten."

About the only humor in which George Eliot allows herself to indulge, is in her conception of the character of Dolly. Aside from the strong religious faith, Dolly has a vein of true humor which vents itself at the expense of man and his constitution.<sup>2</sup>

George Eliot uses comment and thought quotation very successfully in her portrayal of Godfrey Cass' weak, hesitating character,<sup>3</sup> his lack of moral courage,<sup>4</sup> and of shirking of duty.<sup>5</sup> The disappointment of his life is shown by thought quotation,<sup>6</sup> and his philosophical attitude toward it is brought out in his later conversation.<sup>7</sup>

When we are introduced to Nancy Lammeter an indistinct picture of her personal appearance is given to us,<sup>8</sup> but we are not left long in the dark as to her nature. The author soon informs us by means of her favorite methods, thought narrative,<sup>9</sup> and comment.<sup>10</sup> The trials and disappointments of her later life are also brought out by these methods.<sup>11</sup> She was of a conscientious nature, and clung with "painful adherence"<sup>12</sup> to an imagined or real duty--asking herself continually whether she had been in any respect blameable." She believed strongly in the guidance and "will of Providence"<sup>13</sup>. Her true nature is further emphasized by the author in this sentence:-- "It

(1) P. 227. (2) P. 134, 209. (3) P. 53-4, 113, 122. (4) P. 139.

(5) P. 193. (6) P. 247. (7) P. 252, 272. (8) P. 143. (10) P. 157.

(9) P. 147, 163. (11) P. 240, 241, 242, 246. (12) P. 240.

(13) P. 244, 273.





was impossible to have lived with her fifteen years and not be aware that an unselfish clinging to the right, and a sincerity clear as the flower-born dew were her main characteristics."<sup>1</sup>

The character of Adam Bede is most vividly portrayed to us by means of his conversation. More space is devoted to his speech than to any other one method. By this means we learn his religious views<sup>2</sup> and his frank, outspoken, rugged decisiveness,<sup>3</sup> which is often severe in its truthfulness.<sup>4</sup> While he was impatient and impulsive,<sup>5</sup> he was ever ready to confess the hardness of his nature.<sup>6</sup> The sense of duty was very strong in Adam,<sup>7</sup> and he heroically accepted the burdens of his life.<sup>8</sup> Thought narrative, which often takes the form of thoughts spoken aloud,<sup>9</sup> receives a large share of attention at the hand of the author. Thought quotation and mental analysis emphasize the qualities shown by his conversation. His patient love for Hetty<sup>10</sup> and his hesitancy before its avowal;<sup>11</sup> his jealousy of Arthur;<sup>12</sup> and his patient acceptance of his lot are all distinctly shown by these methods. George Eliot devotes more space to the personal description of Adam than she usually does in the drawing of her characters, and the result is that Adam appeals to us as a real, substantial man. We can almost see the large-boned muscular man<sup>13</sup> with his jet-black hair, "tossed about like trodden meadow-grass,"<sup>14</sup> dark eyes and roughly hewn face. While there is very little important action in the book, Adam impresses us as a man of action,<sup>15</sup> quick and decisive.

(1) P. 246. (2) P. 9, 10, 184. (3) P. 170, 219, 312.

(4) P. 304, 306, 472, 478. (5) P. 41, 42, 43, 219.

(6) P. 205, 206, 475. (7) P. 50, 275. (8) P. 171, 231, 477.

(9) P. 50, 330, 205. (10) P. 298, 350, 293, 294.

(11) P. 213. (12). P. 305, 330, 363, 401. (13) P. 331,

(14) P. 6. (15) P. 117, 305.





The gentleness and simplicity of sweet sympathetic Dinah are best shown by her conversation<sup>1</sup> and the author's personal description.<sup>2</sup> She uses mental analysis most successfully in drawing Arthur and Hetty. Hetty's hopes and fears,<sup>3</sup> and Arthur's struggles between conscience and love<sup>4</sup> are carefully delineated.

The plot of "Silas Marner" is very simple, but its very simplicity is in keeping with the rest of the story. There is no tinge of the impossible or melodramatic; the complications which arise being only the natural ones resulting from wrong-doing and concealment. The affairs of Silas and the Cass family are joined in two ways: the hidden treasure of Silas was stolen by Dunstan Cass, and the unowned, motherless child of Godfrey Cass crept in from the snow to Silas's warm hearth. The conversation<sup>5</sup> between the two brothers, reveals to us for the first time the complications and difficulties which beset Godfrey. These are further emphasized by means of mental analysis and comment.<sup>6</sup> The movement of the plot is rather fast at first, chapters three, four and five, setting all the forces in motion. It pauses a little now, however, while the author pictures to us her admirable inn-scene--<sup>7</sup> the humor of which sets off the pathos of the character of Silas,--and describes the New Year's Eve party at Squire Cass's.<sup>8</sup> The plot quickens now, and chapters twelve and thirteen set Godfrey free from the fear that his secret will be discovered. From now until the close, the theme of the book,--Eppie,--receives a large share of the author's attention. The relations between Silas and Eppie, and his love for her, are brought out equally well by conversation<sup>9</sup>

(1) P. 92, 93, 455, 112, 122. (2) P. 32. (3) P. 93, 108, 154,

285-6; Chapters 33 and 37. (4) P. 126, 313, 320. (5) P. 42, 56.

(6) P. 53-3, 174-5. (7) P. 70. (8) P. 146. (9) P. 127, 199, 267, 268.



and analysis.<sup>1</sup> In this plot, conversation and analysis are used with great skill in setting forth the complications.

The plot of "Adam Bede" shows an admirable use of analysis in its development. One thread of plot runs through the whole story, and, interest centers, through it all, in the hero--Adam. He is introduced to us at the very first, and our sympathies are immediately enlisted upon his side. The movement of the plot is slow at first, but quickens rapidly in chapters seven<sup>2</sup> and nine.<sup>3</sup> The story pauses a little while the author examines the minds of the three people, Adam,<sup>4</sup> Hetty<sup>5</sup> and Arthur.<sup>6</sup> Events now follow each other rapidly, the birthday dance,<sup>7</sup> the struggle between Adam and Arthur,<sup>8</sup> the betrothal of Adam and Hetty,<sup>9</sup> the flight of Hetty,<sup>9</sup> the trial,<sup>10</sup> and the final separation.<sup>11</sup> The author allows nothing just to happen. She takes great care to have her events well motivated, and in her zeal to prepare the reader for what is coming, she allows herself to foreshadow events.<sup>12</sup> Mental analysis and conversation have been used with fine effect in bringing out all of the complications of the plot.

To summarize briefly our study of George Eliot's character portrayal and plot development, we find that her favorite method--mental analysis--has been used very successfully in each. She has used a proportionally larger amount of conversation in "Adam Bede" than in "Silas Marner," yet the main lines of the plot, the elements of the conflict of forces,--love, fear, jealousy,--are best shown by means of the methods of examination--thought narrative and mental analysis.<sup>11</sup> George Eliot has chosen a very

(1) P. 202-11. (2) P. 98. (3). P. 126. (4) P. 213, 224.

(5) P. 103, 154. (6) P. 141. (7) P. 885. (8) P. 303.

(9) P. 360, 361. (10) P. 436. (11) P. 8, 88.

(12) P. 46, 51, 319, 256, 321.





happy setting for her stories,--one which especially appealed to her, and with which she was thoroughly familiar when a child. "Adam Bede" and "Silas Marner" are stories of the English peasantry of the county of Warwickshire, and show keen observation of the familiar, but ordinary, fields and village communities. Her appreciation of humor has contributed largely to the success of her realistic descriptions of peasant life.

In his portrayal of character in "Far from the Madding Crowd" Thomas Hardy has been most successful in the use of the methods of exteriorization--speech and action. The character of Gabriel Oak is shown most plainly by his conversation. He is not a man of many words, but his speech brings out all of his characteristics,--sagacious wisdom,<sup>1</sup> abrupt outspokenness,<sup>2</sup> sudden resolution.<sup>3</sup> His later conversation<sup>4</sup> shows his resignation to his lot, his unwavering honesty, and lack of temerity. Considerable space is devoted to the personal description of Oak, yet he does not stand out as a vivid reality. He is set forth in a rather vague, humorous, almost grotesque manner.<sup>5</sup> His first great trouble--the loss of his sheep,--<sup>6</sup> stamped its mark upon him, and changed his expression into one of sadness and meditation.<sup>7</sup> His motions were slow and deliberate; yet if occasion demanded, he could act with decision and quiet energy.<sup>8</sup> Mr. Hardy has expressed the chief characteristics of Gabriel Oak and Bathsheba Everdene in this one sentence:--<sup>9</sup> "There is a loquacity that tells nothing, which was Bathsheba's; and there is a silence which says much, that was Gabriel's." The picture of Bathsheba, as given to us in the author's personal description, is vague and indis-

(1) P. 14. (2) P. 24. (3) P. 31. (4) P. 127, 178.

(5) P. 11. (6) P. 40, 41. (7) P. 42. (8) P. 48, 227, 134.

(9) P. 128.



tinct. We know only that she was a handsome girl with a bright face and black hair; a "fair product of Nature in the feminine form,"<sup>1</sup> whose "features of consequence were severe and regular."<sup>2</sup> She is very talkative,<sup>3</sup> and her conversation gives us the key to her shallow nature. All of her characteristics,--coquetry,<sup>4</sup> love of admiration,<sup>5</sup> impetuous anger and quick repentance,<sup>6</sup> susceptibility to flattery,<sup>7</sup>--are all brought out by this method. Mr. Hardy assists in the portrayal of Bathsheba by some mental analysis,<sup>8</sup> and by occasional comments<sup>9</sup> which are often tinged with philosophy, almost bitterness. Her actions are important in that they emphasize her impetuous, impulsive nature.<sup>10</sup> In the drawing of Farmer Boldwood, the author has again used his favorite method,--conversation,--with best success. There is very little action or personal description<sup>11</sup> and the result is that Boldwood is a shadow, indistinct and unreal. Some comment<sup>12</sup> and mental analysis<sup>13</sup> are used to show the workings of his mind under the influence of a great passion. His conversation<sup>14</sup> brings out all of the impetuosity, intensity and violence of this passion. His passionate words almost over-step the mark and end in only "blame and fury."<sup>15</sup> The character of Troy is a mere stage-figure, with his flattering tongue,<sup>16</sup> cheap town accomplishments,<sup>17</sup> and smooth blandishments. His conversation shows his fascinating yet repellent nature, and his utter lack of moral character.<sup>18</sup> Comment, of a philosophical nature,<sup>19</sup> further

(1) P. 12. (2) P. 23. (3) P. 138. (4) P. 28. (5) P. 94

(6) P. 128, 134. (7) P. 162, 166. (8) P. 123, 124, 271, 253, 254.

(9) P. 124, 127, 175-6, 300, 326. (10) P. 21, 194, 273, 277, 296.

(11) P. 89, 114. (12) P. 116, 308. (13) P. 96, 306.

(14) P. 120, 188, 193, 324, 325, 215, 218. (15) P. 186.

(16) P. 154, 160. (17) P. 163, 173. (18) P. 111, 240, 213, 250.

(19) P. 156, 158, 292, 293.





emphasizes the superficial qualities of Troy's character. All of the characters, with the possible exception of Gabriel, lack reality. They seem to be mere figures into whose mouths Mr. Hardy has put a great deal of superficial, extravagant passion. They simulate deep feeling and strong emotion, but the expression of this passion is too ranting to make it seem real. The human element of the book seems artificial; the dogs and the sheep, only, seem real. <sup>9</sup> As the characters were best developed by means of conversation, so also are the lines of the plot brought out most plainly by this means. There is one main line of plot, in which the fortunes of all the characters are interwoven. The conflict of forces lies in the struggle between love, hate and jealousy. Some foreshadowing is used. We are led, by means of the author's comment,<sup>1</sup> to prepare ourselves for the tragical outcome of events between Bathsheba and Troy; likewise, we are given hints as to the future insanity of Boldwood.<sup>2</sup> The plot begins by setting forth the relations between Bathsheba and Gabriel by means of their conversation.<sup>3</sup> The interest of Boldwood in the plot is unwittingly solicited by Bathsheba when she unreflectingly sends him a valentine.<sup>4</sup> The momentous results of this trifling action are brought out by the conversation of Boldwood. The movement of the plot now becomes somewhat slower until the meeting between Bathsheba and Troy in the fir plantation.<sup>5</sup> A number of events now follow rapidly until their marriage.<sup>6</sup> Bathsheba soon becomes acquainted with the true nature of her husband,<sup>7</sup> and the height of her trouble is reached in chapter 43. The movement then becomes slow until chapter 52,<sup>8</sup> when all the lines are rapidly converging towards the final catastrophe.<sup>9</sup> The

(1) P. 148, 162. (2) P. 238, 323, 355, 221. (3) Chap. 3 and 4.

(4) P. 95. (5) Chap. 14 and 24. (6) P. 150. (7) P. 218.

(8) P. 240, 241, 250, 278. (9) P. 329.



methods of exteriorization--largely conversation, with some action,--have most successfully set forth the lines of the plot and its complications.

The methods of exteriorization have again been used most successfully by Mr. Hardy in "The Return of the Native." In the drawing of his characters, their conversation has received the greatest share of his attention, but some space has been devoted to the author's comment which serves to further emphasize their characteristics. The conversation of Eustacia Vye gives us the key to her nature. By this means we learn of her dislike for her quiet, monotonous surroundings--<sup>1</sup>the Heath--and her love for the gay life of town.<sup>2</sup> Her nature is decidedly fickle,--she loves the best man near her just so long as there is not a better one,<sup>3</sup> and upon the slightest provocation,<sup>4</sup> her affections are transferred to a new, more desirable person.<sup>5</sup> She recognizes the quality of fickleness in her nature when she says:<sup>6</sup> "Nothing can insure the continuance of love. I loved another man once, and now I love you." Disappointed by circumstances<sup>7</sup> and by misfortune,<sup>8</sup> her passionate love begins to cool again.<sup>9</sup> She becomes indifferent, and resolves to be "bitterly merry and ironically gay."<sup>10</sup> The one dream of her life is expressed in this one sentence:<sup>11</sup> "But do I desire unreasonably much in wanting what is called life--music, poetry, passion, war, and all the beating and pulsing that is going on in the great arteries of the world?" Her dream was not realized and she is a disappointed woman.<sup>12</sup> The author's comment<sup>13</sup>

(1) P. 97, 105. (2) P. 106, 227, 281. (3) P. 105. (4) P. 123.

(5) P. 173. (6) P. 226. (7) P. 281. (8) P. 288. (9) P. 289.

(10) P. 293. (11) P. 321. (12) P. 290, 291, 292, 383.

(13) P. 72, 81, 150, 116.





helps to bring out Eustacia's dissatisfaction with her old lover, and her fickle, evanescent passion.<sup>1</sup> Some thought quotation and analysis show her mental attitude toward her old lover,<sup>2</sup> her jealousy of the new,<sup>3</sup> and bitter revolt against life and its restrictions.<sup>4</sup> The author devotes considerable space to the personal description and mental outlook and views of Eustacia.<sup>5</sup> His conception of her is entirely pagan, with her beautiful, stormy eyes,<sup>6</sup> "full of nocturnal mysteries,"<sup>7</sup> and with the "passions and instincts which make a faultless goddess."<sup>8</sup> Although Mr. Hardy devotes considerable space to the personal description of Eustacia, we have a clearer idea of her luxurious, passionate, dissatisfied nature,<sup>9</sup> than of her personal appearance. She remains a beautiful shadow capable of much stormy passion. Her actions--walking alone on the Heath,<sup>10</sup> going with the mummers,<sup>11</sup> and joining in the village dance,<sup>12</sup>--are all characteristic of her,--her fearlessness, her love of adventure, and rebellion against her misfortunes. The conversation of Wildeve brings out all of his qualities, chiefly fickleness and inconstancy,<sup>13</sup>--and finally, repentance.<sup>14</sup> There is no personal description of any moment, Mr. Hardy depending entirely upon the use of conversation and a little comment to bring out the character of Wildeve. Of the several passages of comment,<sup>15</sup> the following best expresses the character of Wildeve:<sup>16</sup> "To be yearning for the difficult, to be weary of what offered; to care for the remote, to dislike the near; it was Wildeve's nature always." Clym Yeobright is a visionary,

(1) P. 117, 135, 162. (2) P. 115. (3) P. 164, 167. (4) P. 404, 5.

(5) P. 74, 81. (6) P. 285. (7) P. 75. (8) P. 74. (9) P. 77, 78.

(10) P. 58, 68, 123. (11) P. 148. (12) P. 291-6. (13) P. 71, 91, 96.

(14) P. 320, 343, 389. (15) P. 247, 298, 342, 421. (16) P. 247.



His conversation brings out all of his rebellion against his easy life, and his determination to be a little less useless than he had been hitherto.<sup>1</sup> We become acquainted with his new culture scheme,<sup>2</sup> and plans for the improvement of the mental condition of the poor by this means. Even in the face of misfortune, he looks philosophically at life,<sup>3</sup> and tries to make the best of his condition. Although considerable space is devoted to the personal description of Clym,<sup>4</sup> he is not a vivid reality, not a clear personality. Mr. Hardy's words are not successful in making a clear picture. "His countenance was overlaid with legible meanings."<sup>5</sup> The face was well shaped, even excellently. But the mind within was beginning to use it as a mere waste tablet whereon to trace its idiosyncrasies as they developed themselves. The observer's eye was arrested,<sup>6</sup> not by his face as a picture, but by his face as a page; not by what it was, but by what it recorded." The qualities of the comparatively unimportant characters Thomasin Yeobright and Diggory Venn are brought out chiefly by their conversation.<sup>7</sup>

The lines of the plot of "The Return of the Native" are brought out most plainly by the conversation of the characters. The movement of the plot is slow in the beginning. The conflicting hopes of four people--Eustacia,<sup>8</sup> Wildeve, Venn,<sup>9</sup> and Thomasin<sup>10</sup> are all set forth in the first book by means of their conversation. Because of this antagonism, affairs are at a stand-still; however, the situation is relieved by the waning of Eustacia's capricious love,<sup>11</sup> and the rumor of a new arrival.<sup>12</sup> The

(1) P. 195-6. (2) P. 200-1, 221, 232-3, 196. (3) P. 290.

(4) P. 157-8, 191-3, 197-9. (5) P. 157. (6) P. 192.

(7) P. 126-9, 43-4, 102-7, 109-10. (8) P. 69. (9) P. 109.

(10) P. 47. (11) P. 115-7. (12) P. 118.





movement of the plot quickens now<sup>1</sup> by the growth of Eustacia's passion for Clym and Wildeve's hasty marriage with Thomasin. The lines of the plot rapidly converge toward the crisis<sup>2</sup>--the marriage of Clym and Eustacia,<sup>3</sup> and his sorrowful parting from his mother.<sup>4</sup> The story pauses a little now,<sup>5</sup> while each one accepts the new misfortune<sup>6</sup> in his own way.<sup>7</sup> The steps taken by Mrs. Yeobright toward reconcilliation with her son<sup>8</sup> are unintentionally stopped by Eustacia.<sup>9</sup> The effects of this are soon felt;<sup>10</sup> Clym is unmerciful,<sup>11</sup> and Eustacia leaves his house.<sup>12</sup> Before milder intentions on the part of Clym could take effect,<sup>13</sup> the catastrophe--the drowning of Eustacia and Wildeve in Shadwater Weir--is reached.<sup>14</sup> There is very little foreshadowing of the final outcome of the plot. However, two remarks of Eustacia's are sufficient when the end is considered:-<sup>15</sup> "Yet I know that we shall not love like this always. Nothing can insure the continuance of love. It will evaporate like a spirit, and so feel full of fears." "Ah! but you don't know what you have got in me."<sup>16</sup> Sometimes I think that there is not that in Eustacia Vye which will make a good homespun wife." Motivation, too, is used with good effect in some places: "They say, too,<sup>17</sup> that Clym Yeobright is become a real perusing man, with the strangest notions about things." This remark prepares us for the introduction of his culture scheme.<sup>18</sup> The meeting between Clym and Eustacia is brought about by Clym helping the

(1) Bk. 2. (2) Bk. 3. (3) P. 238. (4) P. 234, 242. (5) Bk. 4.

(6) P. 283. (7) P. 290, 202. (8) P. 311, 313. (9) P. 323.

(10) Bk. 5. (11) P. 370-5. (12) P. 377. (13) P. 395.

(14) P. 422. (15) P. 226. (16) P. 228. (17) P. 121.

(18) P. 196.



neighbors grapple for the captain's bucket in the well.<sup>1</sup> More comment has been used in the development of the plot of "The Return of the Native" than in that of "Far from the Madding Crowd," yet it is by the methods of exteriorization, chiefly conversation, that the lines of the plot and its complications have been most successfully set forth.

The study of these two books shows us that in portrayal of character and plot construction, Mr. Hardy depends upon the methods of exteriorization. Of these, conversation is the one most largely used.

The locality which Mr. Hardy has chosen as the scene of his stories, is a certain part of England--the counties of Dorsetshire and Wiltshire--which he has called Wessex. He has been familiar with this district from childhood, knows every copse and common, and portrays the country as well as its rustic inhabitants, with a minuteness of detail that shows keen observation and appreciation.

Thomas Hardy's "Far from the Madding Crowd" appeared anonymously, in the Cornhill Magazine of 1874, and the (London) Spectator made a guess that George Eliot was the writer. Bkman. 9:149. Favorable auspices for the entrance of the work of a comparatively new author! One has only to open the book to find passages similar to some of George Eliot's, passages upon which the Spectator probably based its assumption. The following passage is a fair imitation of her quiet humor:- "Mr. Jan Coggan, who had passed the cup to Henery, was a crimson man with a spacious countenance, and private glimmer in his eye, whose name had appeared on the marriage register of Weatherbury and neighboring parishes as best man and chief witness in countless unions of the previous twenty years; he also very frequently filled the post of head godfather in baptisms of





the subtly-jovial kind."<sup>1</sup> Here is a specimen of her serious manner:- "He fancied that he had felt himself in the penumbra of a very deep sadness when touching that slight and fragile creature. But wisdom lies in moderating mere impressions, and Gabriel endeavored to think little of this."<sup>2</sup> But there is an even broader basis for the Spectator's theory. No small part of George Eliot's fame arose from her faculty as a reporter of ale-house conversations among simple rustics. One of her happiest inn-scenes is the one in "Silas Marner,"<sup>3</sup> where Mr. Macey and Ben Winthrop, the butcher and the farrier, are gathered around the fire at the Rainbow quarreling about seeing ghos'es, about smelling them! Mr. Hardy has made a great effort in this direction, and has succeeded remarkably well in imitating her manner, in his inn-scene where the good worthies are sympathizing with Joseph Poorgrass over his unconquerable tendency to blush.<sup>4</sup> This is decidedly clever, Mr. Hardy has evidently read to good purpose some chapters of George Eliot; he has very aptly caught her trick of seeming to humor graciously her queer people and look down upon them from the heights of superior knowledge. These similarities are also very probably some of the grounds upon which Mr. Brownell based his assertion. But Mr. Hardy's imitation is really only a superficial one; in the typical characteristics of each there is a wide disparity.

The novels of George Eliot may be called novels of character, while those of Thomas Hardy are novels of incident. In all of George Eliot's works there is a dominant ethical motive which she works out; she always has an aim or purpose in view. In "Silas Marner" it is to set forth strongly the remedial influence of human affection upon a lonely, ill-used old man. In "Adam Bede" her aim is to show that any transgression of

(1) P. 58. (2) P. 54. (3) P. 79, 93. (4) P. 58.





moral or ethical laws must inevitably bring disastrous results. She has accomplished her object in both cases. George Eliot makes of the novel a medium through which she treats of human life and human nature in their deepest aspects. Mr. Hardy takes a different view of the novel and its aim. His chief purpose in writing is to please and entertain his reader. He has no particular object in view and no decided moral lesson to teach. He depends most largely for his effects upon a profuse use of conversation and new, strange incident. "Far from the Madding Crowd" has much conversational padding, and many incidents of dramatic intensity. Among the latter are the fire,<sup>1</sup> Bathsheba sending the valentine to Boldwood<sup>2</sup>--a trifling action with tremendous results,<sup>3</sup> Troy's fascinating sword-exercise,<sup>4</sup> the storm,<sup>5</sup> Bathsheba opening Fanny's coffin,<sup>6</sup> and the murder of Troy.<sup>7</sup> Several incidents have a tinge of the grotesque,--the stopping of the funeral-wagon,<sup>8</sup> and the gurgyle and its doings.<sup>9</sup> "The Return of the Native" has two remarkable circumstances which are full of the element of the grotesque,--the sinister look out of the evil black eyes of the adder at its helpless victim,<sup>10</sup> and the scene on the heath of the men gambling by the light of the glow-worms.<sup>11</sup> Mr. Hardy says:- "The incongruity between the men's deeds and their environment was striking. The soft, juicy vegetation of the hollow in which they sat, gently rustling in the warm air, the wild animals around, the uninhabited hills, the chink of guineas, the rattle of the dice, the exclamations of the players, combined to form such a bizarre exhibition of circumstances as had never before met on those hills since they first arose out of the deep."<sup>12</sup>

(1) P. 47. (2) P. 95. (3) P. 115. (4) P. 173. (5) P. 230.

(6) P. 274. (7) P. 348. (8) P. 259. (9) P. 289. (10) P. 336.

(11) P. 267. (12) P. 267.





Although "The Return of the Native" is a novel of incident, as well as "Far from the Madding Crowd," it does not contain so many novel circumstances and strange events. On the whole, the incidents are of a more ordinary nature. Many of these "bizarre circumstances" of Mr. Hardy's have a somewhat melodramatic character, which, combined with their strangeness, gives to his books an air of unreality. There is nothing unreal about "Adam Bede" or "Silas Marner;" there is no artificial, fantastic, or grotesque incident introduced to create an unusual effect; every occurrence has an air of reality, of naturalness about it. Mr. Hardy's catastrophes,--the murder of Troy, and the drowning of Eustacia,--have an air of unreal tragedy about them, although they are really in keeping with the high passions,--love, hate, jealousy,--which rage so furiously in each of his books. George Eliot shrank from the use of the melodramatic, and her catastrophes in Adam Bede,--the trial and death-sentence of Hetty,--shows a certain lack of ease in its treatment. In order to lessen the effect of the tragical ending, somewhat, she employs a conventional method,--the hasty arrival of a messenger<sup>1</sup> with a hard-won release from death,--the same convention<sup>2</sup> which Mr. Hardy uses in "Far from the Madding Crowd."

The methods which George Eliot uses most freely in setting forth her characters are her favorite ones of examination,--mental analysis, thought quotation and her own comment. She has used this mental analysis so extensively, so scientifically, that it has been likened to a new system of psychology. Conversation is used in drawing her characters, particularly Adam Bede, but she depends most largely upon analysis for bringing out the problems and difficulties which beset their lives. Pages are devoted to her analysis of the character and motives of Silas Marner, Adam Bede,

(1) P. 468. (2) P. 357.





Hetty Sorrel and Arthur Donnithorne. Hardy uses comparatively little mental analysis, depending almost wholly upon the use of conversation and action to portray his characters. There is one excellent use to which George Eliot puts her mental analysis, which of course is foreign to Mr. Hardy because of his lack of extensive analysis, and that is her preparation for her crises by showing the calm, unsuspecting minds of her characters just before the blow. Thus Silas Marner comes home satisfied that his errand is done, and happy over the prospect of a good supper and the pleasant sight of his guineas, only to find them gone;<sup>1</sup> Adam Bede goes through the wood, hopeful about Hetty, complacent over his good job done, with pleasant thoughts about Arthur, and meets the very people about whom he has been thinking so generously;<sup>2</sup> and again Adam goes to bring Hetty from Snowfield,<sup>3</sup> --happy in his love and approaching marriage,--only to hear that she has never been there; Arthur, too, exultant over the beginning of his real life and complacent over the happy turn affairs had supposedly taken between Adam and Hetty, comes home to hear the shocking news of Hetty's trial.<sup>4</sup>

As analysis entered most largely into the drawing of George Eliot's characters, so also does it bring out most plainly the lines of her plots. In themselves, her plots are very simple; she seeks after no complex intricacies but instead, chooses simple, natural complications to form the foundations upon which she builds her superstructures, spending the greater part of her energies upon the analytical drawing of her characters. Thomas Hardy, on the contrary, depends upon the methods of exteriorization for his plot construction. The conversation of his characters sets forth the complications; and in lieu of mental analysis, he depends, for interest,

(1) P. 72, 75. (2) P. 298, 302. (3) P. 397, 401. (4) P. 443, 450.





upon the introduction of new, strange dramatic incident. George Eliot's plots, particularly that of Adam Bede, literally turn on what her characters think. The complicated state of affairs between Adam, Hetty and Arthur, results from the three different, conflicting mental attitudes; and the final outcome of the plot,--the marriage of Adam and Dinah,--is brought about solely by Adam's mental attitude toward Dinah being changed by a few words from his mother. Mr. Hardy's plots turn not so much on what his characters think as on what they do; on some trifling incident, unimportant in itself, but with weighty results. Some of these incidents,--really moments of fate,--are the valentine episode, and the fascinating sword-exercise, in "Far from the Madding Crowd," and in "The Return of the Native," Clym's return--which alters the lives of all people concerned in the plot.<sup>1</sup> George Eliot manages her plots well, each event being carefully prepared for, and the movement, too, being well regulated. Mr. Hardy is more successful in the use of conversation, in his nature descriptions and in his treatment of rustics, than he is in creating an effective plot; so much of his time is occupied with these, that his plots have a lack of ease, especially in the middle. Mr. Hardy gives very few definite hints as to the final outcome of his plots; his events follow each other with little preparation for their coming. The movement of his plots is very slow, being hindered by the introduction of many nature descriptions, which are, nevertheless, one of the greatest charms of his books.

The emotion which Mr. Hardy portrays in his novels, particularly in "The Return of the Native," is at a very high pitch, is harrowing in its tragic intensity. The expression of this passion really defeats its own purpose, and has an air of unreality, superficiality, about it; it is

(1) P. 312.





strangely lacking in the human element. The passions of George Eliot, on the other hand, are subdued in nature, are intensely human and real. While we cannot sympathize with Bathsheba and Eustacia in their troubles and difficulties--which are usually brought upon them by their own vagaries of temper,--it is impossible not to enter into the spirit of the sorrows of Silas Marner or Adam Bede, so intensely human has their expression been.

George Eliot's philosophical attitude toward life is one of toleration, pity and love. She says in "Adam Bede;"<sup>1</sup>--"It is these people--amongst whom your life is passed--that it is needful you should tolerate, pity and love; it is these more or less ugly, stupid, inconsistent people whose movements of goodness you should be able to admire--for whom you should cherish all possible hopes, all possible patience." She has a strong feeling of sympathy and love for her fellow-men, however common and plain they may be. Hero-worship does not enter into her creed. She says:<sup>2</sup>--"There are few prophets in the world; few sublimely beautiful women; few heroes. I can't afford to give all my love and reverence to such rarities: I want a great deal of those feelings for my every-day fellow-men, especially for the few in the fore-ground of the great multitude whose faces I know, whose hands I touch, for whom I have to make way with kindly courtesy." Her whole attitude toward human life and human nature is one of love and sympathy: "The way in which I have come to the conclusion that human nature is lovable"<sup>3</sup>--the way I have learnt something of its deep pathos, its sublime mysteries--has been by living a great deal among people more or less commonplace and vulgar, of whom you will perhaps hear nothing very surprising if you were to inquire about them in the neighborhoods where they dwelt." Work was one of the essential points in her philosophy. She says,<sup>4</sup>

(1) P. 180. (2) A.B..P.183. (3) P. 187. (4) P. 118.





through the medium of Adam Bede," "There's nothing but what's bearable as long as a man can work; and the best o' working is, it gives you a grip hold o' things outside your own lot." And in another place she says,<sup>1</sup> "His work, as you know, had always been part of his religion, and from very early days he saw clearly that good carpentry was God's will--was that form of God's will that most immediately concerned him." George Elliot's philosophical comment very often becomes didactic in its nature. A few illustrations of her didacticism are:--In "Silas Marner,"--"Instead of trying to still his fears,<sup>2</sup> he encouraged them, with that superstitious impression which clings to us all, that if we expect evil very strongly it is the less likely to come." In "Adam Bede,"--"Let us be thankful<sup>3</sup> that our sorrow lives in us as an indestructible force, only changing its form, as forces do, and passing from pain into sympathy--the one poor word which includes all our best insight and our best love." Duty also entered into the foundation of her philosophy of life. To her, duty, whether imagined or real, was law, and she made her characters adhere to its precepts; if they did not, they suffered the inevitable consequences. The sense of duty was very strong in Nancy,<sup>4</sup> Eppie,<sup>5</sup> and Adam. The latter says:<sup>6</sup> "It's plain enough you get into the wrong road i' this life if you run after this and that only for the sake o' making things easy and pleasant to yourself. If you've got a man's heart and soul in you, you can't be easy a-making your own bed an' leaving the rest to lie on the stones." Also,-- "I'll stay, sir:<sup>7</sup> I'll do the best I can. It's all I've got to think of now--to do my work well, and make the world a bit better place for them as can enjoy it." A strict adherence to duty involves self-sacrifice; and

(1) P. 493. (2) P. 108. (3) P. 492. (4) P. 240. (5). P. 267.

(6) P. 50. (7) P. 477.





George Eliot believes in self-sacrifice, self-giving, a merging of the individual life into universal ends. Of all her books, "The Mill on the Floss" brings out her ideas of self-sacrifice most plainly. "Adam Bede" has two passages of comment which illustrate: "Instead of bursting out into wild accusing apostrophes to God and destiny,<sup>1</sup> he (Seth) is resolving, as he now walks homeward under the solemn star-light, to repress his sadness, to be less bent on having his own will, and to live more for others, as Dinah does." In her comment, the author says: "We are children of a large family,<sup>2</sup> and must learn, as such children do, not to expect that our hurts will be made much of--to be content with little nurture and caressing, and help each other the more." There is no wild crying out against life and its sorrows, in such a doctrine; no crying out to Heaven for deliverance from the misery of living! George Eliot's philosophy rings true; there is a note of reality in it which makes us feel that she writes from experience, and has drawn her conclusions from her own life.

There is a wide difference between the philosophy of George Eliot and that of Thomas Hardy. George Eliot's abounds in deep love and sympathy; Mr. Hardy's in cold intellectuality and pessimism. George Eliot's philosophical attitude toward life is that of a compassionate participator; Mr. Hardy's, that of a disinterested, though curious, observer. His philosophical asides, of an intellectual, almost obscure, nature occur frequently in "Far from the Madding Crowd." The following are some illustrations:-- "It is foreign to a mystified condition of mind<sup>3</sup> to realize of the mystifier that the processes of approving a course suggested by circumstance, and of striking out a course from inner impulse, would look the same in the result. The vast difference between starting a train of

(1) P. 39. (2) P. 298. (3) P. 96.





events, and directing into a particular groove a series already started, is rarely apparent to the person confounded by the issue." "The most vigorous expression of a resolution<sup>1</sup> does not always coincide with the greatest vigor of the resolution itself. It is often flung out as a sort of prop to support a decaying conviction which, whilst strong, required no enunciation to prove it so." Mr. Hardy seems to have no conception of duty and its obligations, and no idea of self-sacrifice. It is true, however, that two of his characters--Gabriel Oak and Diggory Venn,--are of a magnanimous nature, but they are not typical representatives of his ideals. In "Far from the Madding Crowd" Mr. Hardy gives vent to his pessimism in sarcastic,<sup>2</sup> satirical flings at woman-kind in general. His attitude toward women is a little cruel, not very tolerant, thoroughly a man's point of view. George Eliot's sympathetic treatment of women,--particularly Nancy and Dinah,--is perfect; Nancy is a woman's woman, yet one to be loved instinctively. George Eliot puts all of her own strict adherence to duty and obedience<sup>3</sup> to the will of Providence into Nancy.<sup>4</sup> Mr. Hardy's pessimism takes a new character in "The Return of the Native,"--that of a passionate outcry against Fate or Destiny.<sup>5</sup> and life and its limitations. His pessimistic, hopeless attitude can best be shown by quoting his own words: "He had reached the stage in a young man's life<sup>6</sup> when the grimness of the general human situation first becomes clear, and the realization of this causes ambition to halt awhile." "'But the more I see of life<sup>7</sup> the more I perceive that there is nothing particularly great in its greatest walks, and therefore nothing particularly small in mine of furze-cutting.'" He did sometimes think he had been ill used by fortune<sup>8</sup> so far as to say

(1) P. 131. (2) P. 13, 26, 73, 150, 153, 176, 300, 358. (3) P. 240.

(4) P. 244. (5) P. 73. (6) P. 213. (7) P. 290. (8) P. 435.





that to be born is a palpable dilemma, and that instead of men aiming to advance with glory, they should calculate how to retreat without shame." "To have lost<sup>1</sup> is less disturbing than to wonder if we may possibly have won; and Eustacia could now, like other people at such a stage, take a standing-point outside herself, observe herself as a disinterested spectator, and think what a sport for Heaven this woman Eustacia was." "'Oh, the cruelty of putting me into this bad, ignorant, stupid world!<sup>2</sup> I was capable of much; but I have been injured and blighted and crushed by things beyond my control. Oh, what wicked meanness it is of Heaven to devise such tortures for me, who have done no harm to Heaven at all!'" How different are the attitudes of the two authors,--divine love and sympathy and reverence opposed to pessimism and blasphemy.

George Eliot's stories are full of absolute faith and belief in God;<sup>3</sup> her nature was essentially religious, and an outlet for the expression of this feeling was formed in her writing. Thomas Hardy, on the contrary, seems to have felt no need for the support of religion. While the problems besetting human nature are all absorbing ones to George Eliot, to Mr. Hardy, the struggle of humanity for existence seems to mean very little. He seems to have no religion, and no belief in a merciful God. To him, Fate or Destiny is the implacable ruler of the universe, against which it is useless for mortals to struggle,<sup>4</sup> and God manifests himself in the presence of Nature.<sup>5</sup> His real attitude toward life is paganistic, and his Wessex, too, is paganistic in its impulses and tendencies. He says in "The Return of the Native: "For the time christianity was eclipsed in their hearts,<sup>6</sup> paganism was revived, the pride of life was all in all,

(1) P. 387. (2) P. 405. (3) A.B. P. 339. (4) R.of N. P.73,290,405, 339. (5) R.of N. P.30; F.f.M.C. P.135. (6) P. 295.





and they adored none other than themselves." And, "Indeed, the impulses<sup>1</sup> of all such outlandish hamlets are pagan still: in these spots homage to nature, self-adoration, frantic gayeties, fragments of Teutonic rites to divinities whose names are forgotten, have in some way or other survived medieval doctrine." Some of these Druidical ceremonies, fragments of Teutonic rites, are the November heath fires,<sup>2</sup> and the mummers,<sup>3</sup> Superstition, too, is rife among the rustics, and their ignorant faith in the power of signs and charms is supreme.<sup>4</sup> George Eliot's peasants, too, have this belief in traditional superstitions.<sup>5</sup> She says in "Silas Marner:" "In that far-off time<sup>6</sup> superstition clung easily around every person or thing that was at all unwonted, or even intermittent and occasional merely, like the visits of the peddler or the knife-grinder;" "Such strange lingering echoes of the old demon-worship<sup>7</sup> might perhaps even now be caught by the dilligent listener among the gray-haired peasantry; for the rude mind with difficulty associates the ideas of power and benignity;" "And Raveloe<sup>8</sup> was a village where many of the old echoes lingered, undrowned by new voices." The peasants of "Silas Marner" have more of this inherent superstition than do the rustics of "Adam Bede." George Eliot's country is, on the whole, religious, and its inhabitants are religiously inclined. Thomas Hardy's district is paganistic in its tendencies, and its inhabitants are not inclined to religion or church-going.<sup>9</sup> Superstition reigns supreme in Wessex, and this lack of religion is probably one of the reasons for its prevalence.

- (1) P. 439. (2) P. 16, 17. (3) P. 139, 140. (4) R. of N. P. 27, 87, 202, 405; F. f. M. C. P. 202, 225. (5) A. B. P. 51. (6) P. 17. (7) P. 20. (8) P. 20. (9) R. of N. P. 138, 203, 20.





The treatment of George Eliot's rustics is somewhat different from that of Mr. Hardy's. The rustics of "Adam Bede" and "Silas Marner" form the basis for the stories, the center of interest, around which the whole attraction revolves. The lives and fates of Silas Marner and Adam Bede form the basis around which she weaves her plots. Although her rustics are uncultivated and unfamiliar with the brilliant ways of the world, they are not stupid and ignorant. Thomas Hardy's rustics, show two distinct classes,--one very decidedly stupid and ignorant, and the other fairly well educated and familiar with the outside world. Mr. Hardy makes a distinction between the inhabitants of the same district, of the same heath, which is really unaccountable. Why is it that Gabriel Oak, Bathsheba and Boldwood are different from Jan Coggan, Joseph Poorgrass and Henery Fray, or Thomasin, Clym, and Mrs. Yeobright from Grandfer Cantle, Timothy Fairway and Humphrey? One class seems to have a civilization which has really not yet touched their native place--Wessex,--while the other seems to be most typically children of the soil. Although both classes are rustics, for the sake of clearness, I shall give the name only to the latter. Mr. Hardy's rustics have been compared to those of Shakespeare. Their relation to the rest of the story is similar to that of the Shakespearian chorus to the main part of the play. They are placidly indifferent to the hurry and bustle of the external world,<sup>1</sup> moving in their own little orbits, willingly and contentedly ignorant of passing events, and entirely satisfied with their occupations of furze-cutting and sheep-washing. His rustics form an admirable setting for the story, accompanying it, but not becoming involved in the lines of the plot. As the humorous inn-scene<sup>2</sup> of "Silas Marner" sets off the pathos of the

(1) F.f.M.C. P. 137. (2) P. 79, 101.





character of Silas, so do Mr. Hardy's rustics form an admirable background for the thoughtful, serious passages. Their conversation is delightful with all of its humor and ignorance, and Mr. Hardy seems to have caught the trick of reproducing its various shades in a remarkably realistic manner. The rustics of "Far from the Madding Crowd" have been more successfully treated than those of "The Return of the Native," because of the greater effort which the author put into their portrayal. "Far from the Madding Crowd" is, as the title suggests, a story of the people who live outside of the great hurry and bustle of life. Their lives are portrayed more realistically than are those of the peasants in "The Return of the Native," which is chiefly occupied with the trials and failures of a heath-man who is dissatisfied with the ignorant, hopeless condition of his native country. Mr. Hardy's humor lies almost solely in the treatment of his rustics. His chief characters,--Bathsheba, Boldwood, Oak, Eustacia, Clym,--are of an intensely serious nature, too much occupied with their troubles and passions, to have any humor, or any appreciation of humor in their make-up. His rustics, however, have very little else than humor in their natures, they are not serious, not thoughtful, wholly outside of the realm of deep feeling. Their conversation, expressing so much ignorance of the world<sup>1</sup> and utter disrespect for religion<sup>2</sup> or the language of the Bible,<sup>3</sup> is the most boisterous form<sup>4</sup> in which his humor expresses itself. The description of his rustics<sup>5</sup> and his appreciation of dogs,<sup>6</sup> have a more quiet, subdued humorous quality which is very similar to the humor of George Eliot. She seldom indulges in this boisterous humor; the inn-scene in "Silas Marner" is the only scene in which

(1) F.f,M.C. P. 206. (2) P. 264. (3) P. 266. (4) P. 129, 146, 55-69, 77. (5) F.F.M.C. P.10,34,47,56,7-8,99,203,312. (6) P. 30, 37.





her peasants are set forth in a thoroughly humorous manner. The humor which is most typically her own is of a very quiet nature, investing the most trivial objects,<sup>1</sup> unobtrusively appearing in her descriptions of children<sup>2</sup> as well as older people,<sup>3</sup> and often showing itself in her great appreciation of dogs.<sup>4</sup>

In his treatment of rustics, in his nature descriptions, and in the description of other things which help to form the setting for his stories, Mr. Hardy departs from his attitude of curiosity--which he maintains toward life and its problems,--and really becomes interested. Wessex and its humorous inhabitants mean much more to him than the struggles of humanity for existence. He has been particularly fortunate in his realistic descriptions, the greater number of which occur in "Far from the Madding Crowd." The Homestead,<sup>5</sup> to which Bathsheba came as the new mistress, and the great Shearing-barn which belongs to it,<sup>6</sup> are described with a minuteness of detail which makes them exceedingly clear; the shearing<sup>7</sup> and harvest suppers<sup>8</sup> and the Greenhill Fair<sup>9</sup> are all portrayed in a realistic, humorous manner; but it is in the description of the storm<sup>10</sup> that Mr. Hardy is most successful. He excels all of his other efforts in its description; every detail of the landscape is described with intense realism; the storm in all of its majesty can almost be felt and seen. The following is one of his best passages, showing the keenest of observation:- "Then came a third flash."<sup>11</sup> Manoeuvres of a most extraordinary kind were going on in

(1) S. M. P. 19. (2) S. M., P. 134, 140; A. B., P. 21, 483, 486.

(3) S. M., P. 34, 94, 183; A. B., P. 147, 522, 532. (4) A. B., P. 146, 171, 12, 120. (5) P. 71. (6) P. 136. (7) P. 144.

(8) P. 223. (9) P. 309, 312. (10) P. 228, 233.

(11) P. 230.





the vast firmamental hollows overhead. The lightning now was the color of silver, and gleamed in the heavens like a mailed army, Rumbles became rattles. Gabriel from his elevated position could see over the landscape at least half-a-dozen miles in front. Every hedge, bush, and tree was distinct as in a line engraving. In a padlock in the same direction was a herd of heifers, and the forms of these were visible at this moment in the act of galloping about in the wildest and maddest confusion, flinging their heels and tails high into the air, their heads to earth. A poplar in the immediate foreground was like an ink stroke on burnished tin. Then the picture vanished, leaving the darkness so intense that Gabriel worked entirely by feeling with his hands." His description of the fire dance in all of its weirdness is perfect: "It was a perfect dance of death.<sup>1</sup> The forms of skeletons appeared in the air, shaped with blue fire for bones--dancing, leaping, striding, racing around, and mingling altogether in unparalleled confusion. With these were intertwined undulating snakes of green. Behind these was a broad mass of lesser light."

George Eliot's descriptions are equally true to nature and are set forth in a thoroughly realistic manner, but they seem to have more warmth, more real life about them than Mr. Hardy's. Her descriptions of the carpenter shop<sup>2</sup> and the religious gathering on the Green<sup>3</sup> give us excellent pictures, true to life and thoroughly realistic. For closeness of observation and minuteness of detail, her description of the Hall Farm<sup>4</sup> in its various aspects is best, and the following passages are among her finest:--  
 "But there is always a stronger sense of life when the sun is brilliant after rain;<sup>5</sup> and now he is pouring down his beams, and making sparkles

(1) p. 232. (2) A. B. P. 5 (3) P. 13, 21. (4) P. 72, 74, 190.

(5) P. 73.





among the wet straw, and lighting up every patch of vivid green moss on the red tiles of the cow-shed, and turning even the muddy water that is hurrying along the channel to the drain into a mirror for the yellow-billed ducks, who are seizing the opportunity of getting a drink with as much body in it as possible." And, "The yard is full of life now: Marty was letting the screaming geese through the gate, and wickedly provoking the gander by hissing at him; the granary door was groaning on its hinges as Alick shut it, after dealing out the corn; the horses were being led out to watering, amidst much barking of all the three dogs, and 'many whips' from Tim the ploughman, as if the heavy animals who held down their meek, intelligent heads, and lifted their shaggy feet so deliberately, were likely to rush wildly in every direction but the right."

It is in his nature descriptions that Mr. Hardy is most thoroughly at home. His love of nature is intense, and his books are full of passages minute in detail and showing the closest of observation. "Far from the Madding Crowd" contains many nature descriptions<sup>1</sup> which are marvelous in their beauty and exquisite in their gem-like effect, every one full of details. "The Return of the Native," too, is not lacking in these descriptions,--many passages,<sup>2</sup> and even whole pages being devoted to the realistic portrayal of nature. The descriptions of Egdon Heath are excellent, particularly the one in the opening chapter<sup>3</sup> which becomes almost poetic in its mournful intensity. To Mr. Hardy, the influence of nature upon his characters<sup>4</sup> is very strong, and there often exists a harmony between the moods of nature<sup>5</sup> and of mankind. Besides this influence, there is another

(1) P. 14, 15, 119, 187, 219, 280, 297, 315.

(2) P. 59, 60, 219, 235, 237, 240-1, 237, 316, 317, 332. (3) P. 1, 6.

(4) R. of N. P. 73, 80, 193, 199; F. f. M. C., P. 18. (5) R.N. P. 3, 4, 403.





which Mr. Hardy brings out, and that is the conquest of the inanimate over the animate. He says: "The strangest deeds were possible to his mood."<sup>1</sup> But they were not possible to his situation. Instead of there being before him the pale face of Eustacia, and a masculine shape unknown, there was only the imperturbable countenance of the heath, which, having defied the catachysmal onsets of centuries, reduced to insignificance by its seamed and antique features the wildest turmoil of a single man." And, "As he watched,"<sup>2</sup> the dead flat of the scenery overpowered him. There was something in its oppressive horizontality which too much reminded him of the arena of life; it gave him a sense of bare equality with, and no superiority to a single entity under the sun."

George Eliot, like Mr. Hardy, has a passionate love for nature, but she does not indulge so often in passages of description.<sup>3</sup> She is so intent upon her characters and their mental struggles that she must be content with only an occasional description. Her love for nature is none the less, however, as the following passage shows:<sup>4</sup> "I might mention all the divine charms of a bright spring day, but if you had never in your life utterly forgotten yourself in straining your eyes after the mounting lark, or in wandering through the still lanes when the fresh-opened blossoms fill them with a sacred silent beauty like that of fretted aisles, where would be the use of my descriptive catalogue? I could never make you know what I meant by a bright spring day." George Eliot, also, shows the influence of nature upon man, and a certain harmony between the two,--but an influence and harmony peaceful and soothing in their effects,<sup>5</sup> and not merciless and all-conquering, as Mr. Hardy's have a tendency to be. As

(1) R.N. P. 363. (2) P. 239, 339. (3) A. B. P. 132, 222, 253, 297, 520. (4) A. B. P. 36. (5) A. B. P. 71, 301, 507, 520.





George Eliot's country is more homelike in its very nature than Mr. Hardy's, her nature descriptions, have a certain warm, vivifying life about them which Mr. Hardy's lack; she treats of nature as it is seen in the garden, the farmyard, and on the old "Binton Hills,"<sup>1</sup> and the result is that we are more in sympathy with her sweet, simple, familiar nature, than with Mr. Hardy's with all of its brilliance and splendor.

Mr. Hardy's genius is best shown in his nature descriptions and in his treatment of rustics; he has evidently lived his life on the heath to a good purpose, and his real object seems to be to make his country--Wessex--familiar to the world. George Eliot's genius consists most largely in the mental analysis of her characters. Her earlier books, "Adam Bede,"<sup>2</sup> "The Mill on the Floss,"<sup>3</sup> and "Silas Marner,"<sup>4</sup> have less mental analysis and a less frequent display of intellectuality than her later books, "Romola,"<sup>5</sup> "Felix Holt,"<sup>6</sup> "Middlemarch"<sup>7</sup> and "Daniel Deronda."<sup>8</sup> Because of this deliberate intellectuality, her later books have lost a peculiar local coloring, and with it a certain realism. In them, she deliberately sets before herself a purpose, a problem. This may be shown best in "Middlemarch"--which can be taken as typically representative of her later art--in her portrayal of the characters Dorothea and Lydgate. In each of these, the problem which she wishes to solve is how a character with high ideals and noble aspirations is to compete with circumstances antagonistic to the accomplishment of his aims and purposes. One fails because of an "imperfect social state," and the other because the narrowness of Middlemarch society and circumstances were against him. Her purpose is to set forth the power which circumstances--however relentless they may be--have

(1) A. B. P. 520. (2) 1859. (3) 1860. (4) 1861.

(5) 1863. (6) 1866. (7) 1873. (8) 1876.



in shaping the lives of individuals. There is another phase of her philosophy of life which "Middlemarch" brings out, and that is that no man can escape the penalty of wrong-doing,--the evil which we have done will always follow us and we can never escape from punishment for it. The life of the character Nicholas Bulstrode is her proof of this theory. "Adam Bede" and "Silas Marner" have only a tinge of this philosophy which is fully developed in "Middlemarch." She says about Arthur Donnithorne, "No man can escape this vitiating effect of an offence against his own sentiment of right,<sup>1</sup>" and, "Arthur told himself,<sup>2</sup> he did not deserve that things should turn out badly--he had never meant beforehand to do anything his conscience disapproved--he had been led on by circumstances." It is still less forcibly brought out in "Silas Marner;" she says, however, "Assuredly, among<sup>3</sup> these flushed and dull-eyed men there were some who, when their cheeks were fresh, had felt the keen point of sorrow or remorse, had been pierced by the reeds they leaned on, or had lightly put their limbs in fetters from which no struggle could loose them." And, "The yoke a man<sup>4</sup> creates for himself by wrong-doing will breed hate in the kindest nature." Her philosophy of life deepened and broadened with time; her later books contain a much fuller expression of it, and "Middlemarch" may be said to be a summary of her views of life and her philosophy of human nature as she conceived it. Her philosophy has a tinge of pessimism in so far as she believes that circumstances have more power over the lives of individuals than inherent characteristics and impulses. Mr. Hardy's pessimism is of a very different nature, venting itself in satirical remarks about womankind and in passionate, resentful outcries against Destiny or Fate--the unseen ruler of the universe. His characters--with the exception of Clym

(1) A. B. P. 320. (2) P. 321. (3) P. 57. (4) P. 60.





Yeobright--are not troubled with particularly high aims or noble aspirations, and Mr. Hardy seems to have no difficult problems set before him to solve. If he has any purpose in writing, beyond that of presenting Wessex in all of its reality, it is to show the universality of human passions regardless of locality. Mr. Hardy is thoroughly conscious of the tragedy of life, and that in real life there is often a tragic ending. He does not deliberately set out to teach a moral when he introduces Troy; the moral is there, nevertheless, and Bathsheba soon discovers it to her cost. Although he does not state in so many words, he really intends to illustrate the unity of human fate; to portray human life as he sees it, with all of its great passions--love, hate, jealousy. In neither of his earlier works--"Far from the Madding Crowd"<sup>1</sup> and "The Return of the Native"<sup>2</sup> does Mr. Hardy have a particular purpose in view, but in the most famous of his later books "Tess of the D'Urbervilles"<sup>3</sup> he deliberately proclaims a purpose--that of faithfully portraying a pure woman. He fails, for after she yields again to the importunities of her seducer, it is utterly impossible to call Tess "pure", and his book is a ruin, so far as morality is concerned.

George Eliot's works show a great change as time advanced,--a greater intellectuality and a deeper philosophy. Mr. Hardy's show no such change; his outlook upon life apparently does not deepen,--he is always occupied with his nature descriptions, his treatment of rustics, the introduction of strange, dramatic incident and the portrayal of tragic emotions and passions. Neither do Mr. Hardy's books increase in likeness to George Eliot's with the passage of time. We have shown, heretofore, that in a certain quiet phase of his humor, in his treatment of the English rustic,





and an occasional serious tone, Mr. Hardy's characteristics are somewhat similar to those of George Eliot. In other ways,--in the methods most successfully used by each in the drawing of character and the construction of plot, in their philosophy and attitudes toward life in general, and in their treatment of women, the two, are very different. May not these similarities which have been mentioned be merely similarities or resemblances? Does it necessarily follow that, because of these resemblances, one author really influenced the other? I have found no direct proof of such influence, and no statement made by Mr. Hardy himself that he considered George Eliot in the light of a teacher or master. After careful consideration of these similarities and dissimilarities, it is preposterous to call Mr. Hardy an apt pupil of George Eliot. This is only another instance of the carelessness which professed critics often fall into, of making a positive statement, which can be doubted, in the midst of remarks the truth of which can not be questioned.

"Far from the Madding Crowd," Band McNally & Co.

"The Return of the Native," Hovendon Company.

"Adam Bede," The Home Library--A. L. Burt, Publisher.

"Silas Marner," Students' Series of English Classics,

Leach, Shewell & Sanborn.

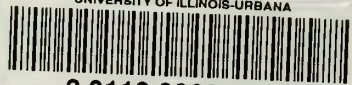








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